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Letter dated 4 March 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In the past 48 hours, 22 Israelis have been killed in four separate attacks carried out by Palestinian terrorists affiliated with the Fatah movement of Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat.

The attacks began shortly after 7 p.m. (local time) on Saturday evening, when a Palestinian suicide bomber detonated powerful explosives in the central Jerusalem neighbourhood of Beit Yisrael. The explosion was timed to coincide with the conclusion of the Jewish Sabbath, an hour when the streets are known to be crowded with people. The terrorist detonated the bomb next to a group of women waiting with their baby carriages for their husbands to leave the nearby synagogue following sundown prayers. Ten Israelis were killed in the explosion and over 50 were wounded, four of them critically. Those killed included an infant and her six-year-old brother; a mother and her three-year-old son; a 12-year-old boy; and four other adults. Five of those killed were from the same family. The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, a group belonging to Chairman Yasser Arafat's own Fatah faction, took responsibility for the attack.

Early the next morning, at approximately 6.30 a.m. (local time), Palestinian terrorists opened fire at a group of soldiers and civilians north-west of Ofrah. Seven Israeli solders and three civilians were killed and four others were wounded before the gunmen escaped to Palestinian-controlled territory. Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade claimed responsibility for this attack as well.

On Saturday night, the bullet-ridden body of a Jerusalem police detective, Chief-Superintendent Moshe Dayan, age 45, was discovered several hundred metres from the Mar Saba Monastery in the Judean Desert. Dayan had been riding his motorcycle in the desert when he was ambushed by terrorists. The Tanzim, an armed militia under the authority of Chairman Arafat's Fatah faction, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Yesterday morning, at approximately 7.30 a.m. (local time), a Palestinian terrorist opened fire on a group of Israeli soldiers near the Kissufim crossing.

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Sergeant Steven Kenigsberg, age 19, was killed in the attack, and three others were wounded. Islamic Jihad and the Tanzim claimed responsibility for the attack.

These attacks are only the latest incidents in the Palestinian campaign of terrorism that continues to escalate in both frequency and lethality. Previous attacks have been detailed in letters dated 27 February 2002 (A/56/843-S/2002/208), 20 February 2002 (A/56/828-S/2002/185), 19 February 2002 (A/56/824-S/2002/174), 11 February 2002 (A/56/819-S/2002/164), 8 February 2002 (A/56/814-S/2002/155), 28 January 2002 (A/56/798-S/2002/126), 22 January 2002 (A/56/788-S/2002/104), 18 January 2002 (A/56/781-S/2002/86), 16 January 2002 (A/56/774-S/2002/73), 11 January 2002 (A/56/771-S/2002/47), 4 January 2002 (A/56/766-S/2002/25), 13 December 2001 (A/56/706-S/2001/1198), 4 December 2001 (A/56/678-S/2001/1150), 30 November 2001 (A/56/670-S/2001/1141), 27 November 2001 (A/56/663-S/2001/1121), 12 November 2001 (A/56/617-S/2001/1071), 5 November 2001 (A/56/604-S/2001/1048), 24 October 2001 (A/56/506-S/2001/1011), 19 October 2001 (A/56/492-S/2001/990), 17 October 2001 (A/56/483-S/2001/975), 8 October 2001 (A/56/450-S/2001/948), 5 October 2001 (A/56/444-S/2001/943), 3 October 2001 (A/56/438-S/2001/938), 24 September 2001 (A/56/406-S/2001/907), 20 September 2001 (A/56/386-S/2001/892), 17 September 2001 (A/56/367-S/2001/875), 7 September 2001 (A/56/346-S/2001/858), 4 September 2001 (A/56/331-S/2001/840), 30 August 2001 (A/56/325-S/2001/834), 27 August 2001 (A/56/324-S/2001/825), 13 August 2001 (A/56/294-S/2001/787), 9 August 2001 (A/56/286-S/2001/780), 8 August 2001 (A/56/280-S/2001/775), 6 August 2001 (A/56/272-S/2001/768), 27 July 2001 (A/56/225-S/2001/743), 26 July 2001 (A/56/223-S/2001/737), 17 July 2001 (A/56/201-S/2001/706), 13 July 2001 (A/56/184-S/2001/696), 3 July 2001 (A/56/138-S/2001/662), 2 July 2001 (A/56/131-S/2001/656), 21 June 2001 (A/56/119-S/2001/619), 19 June 2001 (A/56/98-S/2001/611), 18 June 2001 (A/56/97-S/2001/604), 13 June 2001 (A/56/92-S/2001/585), 11 June 2001 (A/56/91-S/2001/580), 4 June 2001 (A/56/85-S/2001/555), 30 May 2001 (A/56/81-S/2001/540), 25 May 2001 (A/56/80-S/2001/524), 18 May 2001 (A/56/78-S/2001/506), 11 May 2001 (A/56/72-S/2001/473), 9 May 2001 (A/56/69-S/2001/459), 1 May 2001 (A/55/924-S/2001/435), 23 April 2001 (A/55/910-S/2001/396), 16 April 2001 (A/55/901-S/2001/364), 28 March 2001 (A/55/863-S/2001/291), 27 March 2001 (A/55/860-S/2001/280), 26 March 2001 (A/55/858-S/2001/278), 19 March 2001 (A/55/842-S/2001/244), 5 March 2001 (A/55/821-S/2001/193), 2 March 2001 (A/55/819-S/2001/187), 14 February 2001 (A/55/787-S/2001/137), 13 February 2001 (A/55/781-S/2001/132), 2 February 2001 (A/55/762-S/2001/103), 25 January 2001 (A/55/748-S/2001/81), 23 January 2001 (A/55/742-S/2001/71), 28 December 2000 (A/55/719-S/2000/1252), 22 November 2000 (A/55/641-S/2000/1114), 20 November 2000 (A/55/634-S/2000/1108) and 2 November 2000 (A/55/540-S/2000/1065).

Israel holds the Palestinian Authority and its Chairman, Yasser Arafat, directly responsible for these attacks. In all four incidents described above, forces associated with Chairman Arafat proudly claimed responsibility and vowed to carry out still further attacks against Israel. Chairman Arafat's Fatah forces, which have been responsible for virtually all recent terrorist attacks, have now emerged as the primary terrorist threat facing Israel.

Aside from blatantly violating his commitment to renounce the use of terrorism, first expressed in his letter of 9 September 1993 to Israeli Prime Minister

Yitzhak Rabin, and reaffirmed in subsequent agreements reached between the sides, Chairman Arafat's complicity in these attacks places him squarely in opposition to the international community's campaign against terrorism. The international community must make it absolutely clear that such heinous tactics are completely beyond the bounds of acceptability.

Israel remains committed to a negotiated peace settlement with the Palestinians on the basis on United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). But achieving such a settlement will remain elusive so long as attacks against Israeli civilians are encouraged and supported by the Palestinian leadership. Ending the bloodshed and achieving a genuine peace will be possible only once the Palestinian leadership makes clear, in both word and deed, that it rejects terrorism, as stipulated in both the Mitchell Report and the Tenet understanding, and is prepared to re-engage in direct bilateral negotiations in a spirit of partnership and goodwill.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative